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ENGLISH FOLK-TALES IN AMERICA.

ROSE. (A VERSION OF "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST.")

OBTAINED in Cambridge, Mass., from the recitation of Mary Brown, who heard it in New Brunswick from a woman of Irish extraction, born in the province.

Once upon a time there was a widower with one daughter, and he married a widow with two daughters, each of whom was older than his own daughter Rose. The two elder daughters were all for balls and parties. Little Rose had to do all the work, and when they went to a party she was obliged to help them dress, brush, and comb their hair, and never was allowed to go herself. She never complained, but was very kind to her father, and always prepared his meals. Once it was necessary for him to go on a long journey. He asked each of his daughters what he should bring them for a present. The elder daughters wanted silk dresses, jewelry, and all that was rare. Little Rose stood by, not saying a word. Her father asked: "Little Rose, what can I bring for you?" "Nothing, father, but a rose." And she kissed her father, and bade him good-by. "Rose, I shall bring you a rose, the very prettiest I can get, if it should cost me my life." After he got to his journey's end, he came to a splendid palace. The house was empty, but all in order. His breakfast was ready, but he could see no one. He stayed all night, in the morning went into the garden, and oh, the beautiful rose! After he plucked the rose, and had gone a few steps, a great lion met him, frothing at the mouth, and told him, "For this rose you shall die." The father said that he had a very beautiful daughter at home, whose name was Rose, and that, as he was leaving, he promised to bring her a rose; and he pleaded, "If you will only let me go home to my little daughter to bid her farewell." So the Lion let him go home, on condition that he was to return. And as he came home Rose was looking out of the window and saw her father coming, and ran to meet him. "Why," said she, "father, what makes you look so sad?" "Nothing, my child, except that I have plucked a rose, and for this rose I must die." "No, father, you shall not go back and die for the rose, but I will go back and ask to have you pardoned." So she went to the palace. As she entered it seemed to her that everything which her eyes fell on seemed to say, "Welcome, Beauty, here!" Even on her cup and saucer, and on every piece of furniture in her chamber were the words, "Welcome, Beauty, here!" She went out to find the Lion, and said that she had come to ask him to forgive

her father, and that the rose was for her. But the Lion said he would not do it unless she would promise to be his wife. Her father was very dear to her, yet she did not like to marry a lion. The Lion gave her a beautiful gold ring, and told her that whenever she wanted to see her father she was to lay the ring on her table before going to sleep, and wish to see her father, and she would be at home in the morning. Her father was now getting old, and she grieved for him. At night she laid her ring on the table, at the same time making a wish that she would like to see her father. The next morning she found herself with her father, whom she found much changed. His hair had turned white from grief at the thought of losing his Rose, or having her marry the Lion.

That night she laid her ring on the table, and wished herself back at the palace. The palace was more beautiful than before, and the table all ready. On every plate were the words, "Welcome, Beauty, here!" On the first morning she went out into the garden. The poor Lion was lying very sick, and she looked at him. "Oh, I cannot bear to see my poor Lion die; what am I to do?" Finally, she said that she could not bear it any longer, and she called out, "I will be your wife." With this a beautiful young prince stood before her. So they were married, and he sent for her father, and the step-sisters who had been so cruel to her were made servants to stand at the post of the gate before the palace, and all the people were happy.

This story will be recognized as a form of "Beauty and the Beast," familiar to all English-speaking children. The version, though brief and imperfect, has some interest as illustrating the relation between folk-lore and literature.

Properly speaking, "Beauty and the Beast" is not a folk-tale at all, but a literary product. The history of its composition has been traced by Mr. W. R. S. Ralston, in the "Nineteenth Century" for December, 1878. Madame de Villeneuve (Gabrielle Susanne Barbot), one of the imitators of Perrault, published in 1740 a collection of tales called "Contes Marins," supposed to be related during a voyage to St. Domingo. One of these was "La Belle et la Bête," a somewhat tedious narrative, which was reprinted in the great library of tales called "Cabinet des Fées," where it occupies one hundred and fifty pages of the twenty-sixth volume. Nothing could seem less adapted to popular circulation than this story, the plot of which is obscured by long monologues and descriptions. Nevertheless, a writer of books for children, Madame J. L. Leprince Beaumont, conceived the idea of abridging it into a nursery tale, and in a reduced form included it in her "Magasin des Enfants," which appeared in 1757. This work made a sensation, was almost immediately translated into

many languages, and introduced a new branch of literature, that designed especially for the amusement and instruction of children. "La Belle et la Bête," the best of these tales, was rendered into English, and became at once a nursery classic. It is from this latter that our variant, which seems to have obtained a certain period of oral currency, has been derived.

There is a whole series of Italian folk-tales, which have descended from the same literary source, though they have undergone, on the lips of the people, extensive changes and recompositions. One of these will be found translated in "Italian Popular Tales," by Prof. T. F. Crane (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1885, p. 7), and references to other forms will be found in his notes. The true derivation of the tale he quotes is contained in its title, "Zelinda e il Mostro." Zelinda is a form of Belinda, which is for Bellina, diminutive of Bella, so that the name is equivalent to our English "Beauty and the Beast." (See Pitre's Collection, No. 39, notes.) These Italian tales sometimes borrow primitive elements from other related sources; there are no internal characteristics, except a different system of manners and ideas, to indicate literary descent.

It is this introduction, through a literary channel, into the primitive simplicity of the folk-tales, of a more refined and complicated system of ideas, which constitutes the interest of the subject. It is further worth remarking that this change was not the work of the first hand. The story of Madame de Villeneuve is not marked by any special attempt at moral treatment. In this tale the heroine, who has been left by her father in the palace of the Beast, is visited in her dreams by a beautiful youth, with whom she falls in love. This imaginary personage is the opposite of the monster, who in this narrative is veritably *bête*, — apparently as stupid as he is ugly, — and who addresses to the timid guest a demand upon her favors of the most primitive rudeness. Beauty, although pitying the Beast, has no affection for him; she consents to the marriage because she is recommended by her imaginary lover to do so, and not until the morning after her acceptance does she discover the identity of the youth of her dreams with the host of the castle. These features of Madame de Villeneuve's work indicate that the foundation on which her story was based was a form of that common tale of Cupid and Psyche in which the hero is a man by night and an animal by day, while the heroine lives happily with her mysterious husband until separated from him by the devices of envious sisters, but finally seeks him out, and delivers him from the spell by which he is bound. The authoress introduced into the narrative the outward elegancies of the French court of the eighteenth century, but did not essentially alter the moral type.

On the other hand, the abridger, who wrote with an avowed moral purpose, turned the story into a sort of allegory, in which is represented the power of goodness, kindness, and continued attention to win, in spite of an unpromising exterior, the love of a gentle heart. This moral character was essentially new. It is interesting to note that this quality, far from proving a demerit in the eyes of the people, recommended the tale to Irish and Italian peasants as well as to the educated classes.

Madame de Villeneuve, in the treatment of her tale, was influenced by literary antecedents. Straparola (in 1550), the first modern writer who used the folk-tale for a literary purpose, gives (in his *Second Night*) the narrative of an enchanted prince, who, by the doom of a fairy, is compelled to live under the form of a pig until he has married three wives. The two first conspire against their odious husband, and are put to death by him; the third, their younger sister, treats him kindly, and, as a reward, during the night he assumes his true form. At last the bestial envelope is discovered and destroyed, the spell is broken, and the young pair are made happy. In this form the relation is closely akin to the popular tale, from which it is not separated by any essential moral distinction. The story, almost two centuries later, was turned into French, and enlarged by Madame D'Aulnoy, who inserted many romantic traits, and introduced in some measure the element of courtship. Prince Marcassin, by fair words, persuades the maiden to visit him in his cave, where he detains her by force. The idea of a wooing, on the part of the monster, as the central point of the tale, was further worked out, as has been shown, by Madame de Villeneuve. But it was only in the hands of Madame de Beaumont that the fairy story came to represent modern love-making, a conception foreign to the folk-tale, into which it was by successive stages thus introduced, and then descended, with its new view of life, to the people.

There are curious resemblances between the Italian tale and the oral English variant above given. Thus, in one version (Pitrè, No. 39), the name of the heroine is Rusina (Rosina). As Rose finds written on all objects the words, "Welcome, Beauty, here," so in the Italian, on books and dresses are written words which, in translation, would be "Empress Rose." The origin of this trait is, that in the original story of Madame de Villeneuve, after Beauty has given her consent, the words "*Vive le Bête et sa femme*" are seen in letters of fire during the illumination of the castle. Thus the picture of the splendor of a royal fête in the France of the eighteenth century served as the suggestion for the good-hearted, but somewhat tasteless, trait of the popular story. It may be further remarked, that in the same Italian tale the beautiful youth of Madame de Villeneuve, suppressed by the

adapter, reappears ; she is solicited by him, but prefers the monster, to whom she is bound by gratitude. If every step of the history of the tale were not matter of record, these resemblances would be supposed to indicate a relation between the versions in question, which does not exist. This is mentioned merely to point out the difficulty of tracing the history of stories by means of apparent resemblances.

It may also be observed that the fondness of the maiden for flowers is a taste of literary derivation. The primitive popular idea may be seen in some of the Italian forms of the Cupid and Psyche tale, where the girl, who has gone out in a period of scarcity to gather roots for domestic consumption, in pulling up a radish comes on the door of a subterranean palace, from which issues the monster.

JOHNNY-CAKE.

The following variant of the nursery tale of "Johnny-cake," already printed in the JOURNAL OF AMERICAN FOLK-LORE (vol. ii., p. 70), is communicated by Miss Julia D. Whiting, of Holyoke, Mass., who remembers the story as a favorite of her early years. It will be found to resemble the Scottish version already alluded to in the preceding number in connection with the tale.

There was once an old woman and old man who lived in a little house. One morning the old woman got up and made a Johnny-cake and put it in the oven to bake, and said to the old man, "I am going out to milk the cow and do you turn the Johnny-cake."

The old man was lazy, so instead of getting up he lay abed, and by and by he said, "Oh dear, I shall have to get up to turn the Johnny-cake."

The Johnny-cake called out, "I can turn myself," and hopped out of the oven and ran away. The old man got up and ran after him, and called to the old woman, and they both ran as fast as they could, but they could n't catch Johnny-cake.

By and by Johnny-cake met (here my memory fails me. I cannot remember the persons and animals he met, but I know that every one said) : —

"Where are you going, Johnny-cake?"

He answered. "I've run away from a little old woman, a little old man, a little old pot, and a little old pan, and I'll run away from you if I can."

Every one he met ran after Johnny-cake, but nobody could run fast enough to catch him, but finally he came to a river and he did n't know what to do.

Here he saw a fox, and the fox said, "Where are you going, Johnny-cake?"

He said, —

“I’ve run away from a little old woman, a little old man, a little old pot, and a little old pan, and I’ll run away from you if I can.”

Then he said, “How shall I get over the river?”

The fox said, “Get up and sit on my tail, and I’ll take you over.”

So Johnny-cake got on the fox’s tail, and the fox went into the river. Pretty soon the fox let his tail down into the water and frightened Johnny-cake, and he said, “I am getting wet, I’m afraid I shall drown.”

So the fox said, “Get on my back.”

So Johnny-cake got on his back, but pretty soon he said, “I am getting wet, I’m afraid I shall drown.”

So the fox said, “Get on my shoulder.”

So Johnny-cake got on his shoulder, but the fox went deeper into the water, and Johnny-cake was frightened, and the fox said, “Get on my neck,” and then Johnny-cake got on his neck, and as soon as he did the fox turned round his head and eat poor Johnny-cake up, and that was the end of Johnny-cake.